

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

3116

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

ACTION

November 26, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: GENERAL SCOWCROFT
FROM: CHARLES A. COOPER
SUBJECT: Population NSSM

I am the culprit who has delayed this NSSM. I have many problems with it, but won't hold it up if you think it should go forward at this time. However, I discussed this with Hal Horan last week and we agreed we would talk to Win Lord about it on his return. (I gave Win this week to get settled.) Apart from tightening up on the content of the study, I think it is absolutely essential that we know in advance who is going to do the study and how. This is an area where such a high-level study can be a real mess.

You should know, if you don't already, that Draper (along with Phil Claxton) belongs to a school of thought about population which has few respectable adherents left. In addition to taking a rather over dramatic view of the problem, Draper, Claxton, et al continue to ride a particular hobbyhorse of a solution, namely that better contraceptives and family planning programs are the answer. Almost nobody agrees with this anymore, since there is abundant evidence that changing the number of children people want is much more important than reducing the number of unwanted children.

We have been plagued, in AID and elsewhere, with simplistic views of the population problem and simplistic approaches to its solution. A NSSM that reinforced the wrong sets of entrenched attitudes could do much more harm than good. Nevertheless, the choice is yours.

Recommendation:

That Hal Horan and I discuss with Win Lord; lay groundwork carefully; probably issue NSSM ~~in approximately two weeks.~~ ASAP

Approve 120 Disapprove _____

That NSSM be issued now.

Approve _____ Disapprove _____